

Ben Cook - AFA-Michigan letter to Chairman Melton

From: <AFAM@chartermi.net>
To: "Jack Hoogendyk" <jackhoogendyk@comcast.net>
Date: 3/15/2007 4:16:32 PM
Subject: AFA-Michigan letter to Chairman Melton
CC: <bcook@house.mi.gov>, <jhunaul@house.mi.gov>

Rep. Hoogendyk,

Per your request, here is the text of our letter to the committee, cc'ed to the addresses you requested.

Gary Glenn, President
 AFA-Michigan

 March 13, 2007

The Honorable Tim Melton, Chair
 House Education Committee
 Michigan House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Education Committee:

On behalf of all of Michigan's children, not just those who fall into certain segregated categories based on personal characteristics, we write in support of efforts to protect all public school students from bullying and in opposition to the unnecessary, misguided means by which HB 4091 and HB 4162 purport to seek such protection.

First of all, the underlying assumption behind both pieces of legislation -- each of which would by state law mandate that local school districts adopt certain anti-bullying policies -- is that local school boards, local school principals, local school principals and teachers, and local parents either (1) do not sufficiently care about the safety of children entrusted to their care, or (2) if they do care, are incapable or unwilling, absent a politically-motivated state mandate, to effectively act to protect those children.

Is it reasonable or fair to believe that being elected to the state Legislature endows lawmakers with a greater or more sincere concern for the safety of students -- or any greater enlightenment as to how to effectively secure it -- than that of local school officials and parents? We think not.

(A parenthetical question: Do these bills propose an unfunded mandate, or have their sponsors found surplus cash in our otherwise extremely tight state budget to provide funding to every local school district and charter school to cover any and all expenses associated with the prescribed top-down state mandate?)

Clearly, unless you sincerely believe local officials and parents are simply too uncaring or incompetent to act to protect students -- and we doubt that you do -- then the state mandate at the heart of both bills is simply unnecessary.

In the absence of any need for the state to mandate that local school officials and parents act to protect their own children, the real agenda behind this legislation is obvious enough.

The first clue that something other than a redundant mandate to ensure student safety is the motivating agenda behind this legislation is the coalition of organizations promoting it, a collection of homosexual activist groups and allied organizations whose broader agenda is to promote and legitimize homosexual behavior, see such behavior codified by law as a basis for special "protected class" status, and redefine basic social institutions such as marriage -- all despite the severe personal and public health hazards of such behavior, particularly among young people.

Specifically, the following homosexual advocacy organizations are sponsoring a March 28th "lobbying day" in

support of these bills: Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network, Michigan Equality, Human Rights Campaign, AFSC Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender Issue Program, Affirmations, Coalition for Adoption Rights Equality, and the Triangle Foundation. They are joined as sponsors by two organizations that endorse their broader homosexual advocacy agenda, ACLU-Michigan and the National Organization of Women (Michigan chapter).

Homosexual activists and their allies' real agenda is clear: secure passage of an unnecessary state mandate that requires public school officials to legitimize and protect the practice of homosexual behavior by formally recognizing such behavior as the basis for offering specially designated protection to students who engage in it.

If proponents of this legislation were sincerely motivated by concern for student safety, they would support a policy that simply bans bullying or harassment of any student, for any reason -- not demand that students be segregated into various categories based on personal characteristics or behavior and receive specially designated protection based on those segregated categories, including on the basis of engaging in homosexual behavior.

In fact, as we read and interpret the state mandate legislation, bullying and harassment would only be prohibited if it was allegedly motivated by animus based on one of the characteristics or behaviors by which students would be formally segregated for protection.

Astoundingly, as we read the bill's language, it would not apply to a bully who beats up or picks on another student merely because he can or because he simply doesn't like the other student as an individual, without regard to any personal or behavioral characteristic.

The solution seems obvious: if you believe local school officials and parents are incapable or unwilling to protect students absent a state mandate, you should mandate the adoption of a bullying policy that prohibits bullying and harassment of any student for any reason, and throw out in total the politically correct, politically motivated resort to segregated "protected class" categories as the basis for offering protection.

Simply put, for what possible reason would you not declare all students to be a protected class, regardless of what motivates other students who bully them?

That broad principle aside, we further believe that you should specifically reject the attempt to define homosexual behavior in particular as the basis for establishment of a "protected class."

Such behavior not only threatens personal and public health, but because of that health risk, your mandating that schools formally recognize homosexual behavior as a basis for special "protected class" status needlessly raises a question of potential legal liability for local schools.

If anything, the Legislature should mandate that schools avoid any question of legal liability for the "tort of negligence" if (1) the district's personnel or policies are viewed by students as approving of, encouraging or endorsing homosexual behavior, and (2) a student, relying on that understanding, thereafter engages in such behavior and suffers physical harm as a direct result.

Such risk of liability for the "tort of negligence" is acknowledged even by attorneys for homosexual activist groups. (Section II-b, "A Legal Sketch of the Issues of Parental Consent and Related Tort Liability in the Context of Youth Service Providers Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Youth", David Buckel, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, Sept. 14, 1995.

Public school officials have a legal duty not to put children at risk by in any way legitimizing or encouraging homosexual behavior, a practice scientifically proven to result in a dramatically higher incidence of domestic violence, mental illness, illegal drug use, promiscuity, life-threatening disease, and premature death. School officials have a moral and civic duty instead to actively discourage such self-destructive behavior among young people.

The risk of a student suffering physical harm from engaging in homosexual behavior is high, according to numerous scientific studies which document the severe health consequences of homosexual behavior:

Domestic violence

"Thus, only substance abuse and AIDS adversely affect more gay men, making domestic violence the third largest health problem facing gay men today...Domestic violence may affect and poison as many as 50 percent of gay couples...The probability of violence occurring in a gay couple is mathematically double the probability of that in a heterosexual couple...we believe as many as 650,000 gay men may be victims of domestic violence each year in the United States." (Men Who Beat the Men Who Love Them, pp. 1, 12, and 14, David Island, PhD, and Patrick Letellier, MA, co-editors of the National Lesbian & Gay Domestic Violence Network Newsletter.)

"The truth of the matter is, however, that you are much more likely to be injured by someone you love than by a gay-basher on the street." (Community United Against Violence, "the most comprehensive lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender domestic violence program in the nation," San Francisco, Ca.)

In San Francisco, females involved in homosexual relationships outnumbered males better than two-to-one among victims of homosexual domestic violence, according to a study by the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs. (Associated Press, July 31, 2001.)

Mental illness

"People with same-sex sexual behavior are at greater risk for psychiatric disorders" - including bipolar, obsessive-compulsive, and anxiety disorders, major depression, and substance abuse. (Journal of the American Medical Association, January 2001.)

Illegal drug use

"Homosexual women had a higher 12-month prevalence of substance use disorders than heterosexual women." (JAMA, January 2001)

"(S)ignificantly higher percentages of homosexual men and women abuse drugs, alcohol and tobacco than do heterosexuals." (Medical Institute of Sexual Health, Executive Summary, "Health Implications Associated with Homosexuality," 1999.

The Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry published a study of 4,000 high school students by Harvard Medical School, which found that "gay-lesbian-bisexual youth report disproportionate risk for a variety of health risk and problem behaviors...(from) engag(ing) in twice the mean number of risk behaviors as did the overall population...GLB (gay, lesbian, bisexual) orientation was associated with increased...use of cocaine (and other illegal) drugs. GLB youth were more likely to report using tobacco, marijuana, and cocaine before 13 years of age. Among sexual risk behaviors, sexual intercourse before 13 years of age, sexual intercourse with four or more partners. and sexual contact against one's will all were associated with GLB orientation." (Garofalo, Robert, et al, "The Association Between Health Risk Behaviors and Sexual Orientation Among a School-based Sample of Adolescents," Pediatrics 101, no. 5, May 1998: 895-902.)

Promiscuity

"Since summer, I've been dating a really wonderful guy...This is his first relationship, so he has not yet been ruined by all the heartache, lies, deceit, and game-playing that are the hallmark of gay relationships. I know the odds of making a gay male relationship work. A study I once read suggested that nine out of 10 gay men cheat on their lovers." ("Brent's Fagenda" by Brent Dorian Carpenter, columnist, Between the Lines, Jan. 30, 2002.)

Alan P. Bell and Martin S. Weinberg studied 574 white male homosexuals, 100 percent of whom had already had at least three sexual partners, 97 percent at least ten, 75 percent at least one hundred, and 28 percent at least one thousand. (Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity among Men and Women, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978, 81-93, 308-9.)

David P. McWhirter and Andrew W. Mattison (both homosexual) studied 156 male homosexual couples, most of whom once expected to have a sexually exclusive relationship, and found that only seven of these couples -- none of whom had been together five years -- claimed to have succeeded. (The Male Couple: How Relationships Develop, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1984, 252-59.)

Life-threatening disease

"Homosexual men are at significantly increased risk of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, anal cancer, gonorrhea and gastrointestinal infections as a result of their sexual practices. Women who have sex with women are at significantly increased risk of bacterial vaginosis, breast cancer and ovarian cancer than are heterosexual women." (Medical Institute of Sexual Health, Executive Summary, "Health Implications Associated with Homosexuality," 1999.)

"MSM (men who have sex with men) have large numbers of anonymous partners, which can result in rapid and extensive transmission of STDs (sexually transmitted diseases)...The high proportion of persons with syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydial infection who also were infected with HIV is of particular concern. Persons with STDs, including genital ulcer disease and nonulcerative STD, have a twofold to fivefold increased risk for HIV infection. Control of STDs is a central component of HIV infection prevention efforts in the United States; resurgence of bacterial STD threatens national HIV infection prevention efforts." ("Resurgent Bacterial Sexually Transmitted

Disease Among Men Who Have Sex With Men -- King County, Wa., 1997-1999, Center for Disease Control.)

Premature death

"Life expectancy at age 20 years for gay and bisexual men is 8 to 20 years less than for all men. If the same pattern of mortality were to continue, we estimate that nearly half of gay and bisexual men currently aged 20 years will not reach their 65th birthday." (International Journal of Epidemiology, International Epidemiological Association, Oxford University, Vol. 26, 657-661, 1997.)

In sum, this legislation presupposes that local school officials and parents are either too uncaring or too incompetent to protect the children entrusted to their care, absent a mandate by the Legislature. This presupposition, we believe, is false.

If lack of action by local schools and parents is so grievous and widespread that a state mandate is the only solution, we respectfully suggest that you mandate the protection of all students from bullying regardless of the personal or behavioral characteristics of the victim and avoid entirely the segregated categories approach proposed by these bills. Protecting all students, not practicing identity politics, should be the aim.

The state of Michigan has not established or recognized "protected class" status on the basis of homosexual behavior or so-called "gender identity or expression." You should not mandate that public schools do so based on school children's homosexual behavior or emotional delusions and confusion about their gender, a dangerous precedent proven to be fraught with unanticipated consequences. Mandate that public schools segregate children into various protected classes, and prohibit harassment on the basis of homosexual behavior, for example, and you can be sure that some ambitious local official or homosexual activist will insist that such a policy would be violated by allowing the Cub Scouts to recruit in or use school facilities.

Finally, homosexual behavior poses a severe personal and public health threat to young people. Such behavior should not be formally recognized and legitimized as a basis for ensuring student safety (something school officials already have an obligation to provide all students), since doing so would unavoidably inform students that school officials believe that such behavior itself is approved of. The perception that school officials approve of homosexual behavior will validate or even increase adolescent experimentation with such behavior, put children's health at severe risk, and raise questions of legal liability for school officials whose actions communicate such a message.

For all these reasons, we urge you to reject both HB 4091 and HB 4162.

Respectfully,

GARY GLENN
President

----- Original Message -----

From: Jack Hoogendyk

To: afam@chartermi.net

Cc: bcook@house.mi.gov ; jhunaul@house.mi.gov

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2007 3:49 PM

Subject: your letter sent to Chairman Melton

Mr. Glenn, I read portions of your letter dated March 13, 2007 as testimony in the education committee meeting on March 13. Can you please email a copy of the letter to Ben Cook, committee clerk and Joan Hunault the from the House Fiscal Agency, so that it can be added to the content of testimony from the committee meeting? If you do not have an electronic copy, please fax a copy to my office 517-373-8872.

Ben's and Joan's email addresses are in the CC: line above.

--

Regards, Jack Hoogendyk